



# **MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**Northern Grampians Shire  
Council**

**Positive Ageing Team**

**5358 0514**

**Customer Service**

**5358 8700**

# Contents

Welcome	2
About Meals on Wheels	3
Your role as a Meals on Wheels volunteer	3
What Meals on Wheels expects of you	4
Visiting homes	4
Drivers and deliverers	5
Emergencies	5
Safety	5
Handling feedback	5
Transport and insurance for volunteers	5
Occupational health and safety	6
Client rights	7
Client responsibility	7
Volunteer worker rights	7
Volunteer worker responsibilities	7
Meals on Wheels step-by-step	8
Meals on Wheels collection point	9
HACC & Disability services complaints/feedback record form	10
Frequently Asked Questions	10
Communications and contacts	11

# Welcome

Welcome to the Northern Grampians Shire Council Meals on Wheels service. Helping people stay active, involved and doing as much for themselves as possible is proven to help people stay more independent with a greater sense of wellbeing.

Our Meals on Wheels volunteers are delivering close to 200 meals a week around the Shire. We rely on members from the community to help deliver these meals to our clients who need them. We value our volunteers and without them we wouldn't have Meals on Wheels service.

## About Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels, along with other Positive Ageing services, aim to assist the elderly and people with disabilities to remain living independently and at home for as long as possible.

All meals are designed to meet daily nutritional requirements and specific dietary requirements. In Stawell, meals are prepared by Stawell Regional Health. In St Arnaud, they are prepared by East Wimmera Health Services.

Meals are available seven days a week, based on assessed needs and dietary requirements and can be delivered either hot (Stawell only) or frozen.

Meals are delivered Monday to Friday by volunteers from the community and frozen meals are also available for people to heat on the weekends (delivered on Fridays).

Delivered main meals consist of soup, juice, main course and dessert.

Light meals (available in St Arnaud only) consist of a round and a half (6 points) of mixed sandwiches and a piece of fruit.

Volunteers often alert their supervisors if a client's health is deteriorating. This early intervention and prompt medical attention can often prevent hospitalisation or in some cases, permanent care.

## Your role as a Meals on Wheels volunteer

As a Meals on Wheels volunteer, you will help deliver meals to aged residents and residents with a disability, who are without family or community support and who are unable to cook meals for themselves.

### Job description

- At **11.30am**, collect meals from Stawell - Stawell Regional Health (at the front door)
- At **10.30am**, collect meals from St Arnaud - East Wimmera Health Service kitchen (at the rear of the hospital - MOW door).
- Deliver meals to clients on allocated round in the order as presented on the list.
- Return eskies, baskets and trays to hospital after deliveries have been completed.
- Advise Positive Ageing Office if any concerns.
- Respect recipient's confidentiality at all times. Do not discuss with members of the community.

### Basic qualifications

- Good communication skills
- Friendly attitude
- Ability to read
- Driver's Licence
- Police Check
  
- Working with children check

**Orientation/training** - On the job training will be provided, in conjunction with reading this handbook.

**Immediate Supervision** - Positive Ageing Services Officer

**Hours/times required** - Volunteers can volunteer as much or as little as they want. Volunteering days can be flexible, joining a permanent roster or being on the emergency contact list only or both.

### What Meals on Wheels expects of you

We ask you to treat our clients with dignity and kindness, and to respect their rights and individuality. Specifically, your responsibility is to;

- Be reliable, dependable and helpful
- Be committed to the program
- Ask for support when you need it
- Give sufficient notice when you are not able to volunteer on your rostered day

- Be aware of your limitations
- Be trustworthy and respect client confidentiality
- Be honest, patient and non-judgemental
- Carry out the work you have agreed to do responsibly, safely and with ethics and diligence.
  
- As part of the selection process, all new volunteers must also consent to a Police Check and fill out a Northern Grampians Shire Council Volunteer Registration Form. Both documents are returned to Northern Grampians Shire Council for processing.

### Visiting homes

When visiting clients homes, volunteers must follow these guidelines;

- Always wear the Northern Grampians Shire Council volunteer lanyard
- Read instructions before entering a client's home. It will tell you if you can just enter, whether to knock loudly and wait or even go through a back door.
- Refuse politely any gifts clients offer to you
- Respect client's privacy and personal circumstances
- Do not pursue any personal commercial interest
- Always sight the client before leaving a meal as it is a duty of care to see the client. If no-one is home, never leave the meal. It must be returned to the hospital and kitchen staff notified.

### Drivers and deliverers

We encourage two people to deliver meals to clients. This is to ensure volunteers are safe when delivering meals. It's also more efficient with two people.

Your visits provide valuable social contact for many isolated people in our community, so it's important that you are friendly and helpful, without getting too involved in their personal lives.

It is important that you maintain confidentiality by not discussing any client's personal details with other people.

### Delivering meals

Following these simple guidelines to ensure a smooth delivery.

- Dress neatly and appropriately
- Be at the hospital meals collection point on time to ensure meals go out at the right time and clients get a hot meal.
- Take a mobile phone in case of emergency or if you get lost.
- Read delivery instructions before starting your round to ensure you fulfil the client's needs.

- Always wear the Northern Grampians Shire Council volunteer lanyard when entering a client's homes.
- Respect the client's privacy and personal circumstances and avoid making comments about their living conditions.
- For food safety and temperature control, keep lids on insulated containers and do not remove food from containers.
- If a client isn't home please **do not** leave a meal unattended. Return it to the hospital at the end of the round and notify hospital kitchen staff.
- If you see a hazard while entering a client's home please report it to the Positive Ageing Office to ensure the appropriate steps are taken to make our volunteers and clients safe.
- Comply with all road rules, including parking restrictions.

### Emergencies

If a client is found in an emergency situation, your first action is to call '000' so that medical aid can be provided. In these circumstances it is perfectly acceptable to use the client's phone.

If you find a client is unwell or in distress, it may be necessary to stay with them until help arrives. This is particularly necessary if someone has collapsed or is unconscious. It is important that you call the Positive Ageing Office to inform staff of what is happening.

Some clients do not have insight into their condition so if you are concerned and do not know what to do please ring the Positive Ageing Office to ask advice.

### Safety

The safety of our volunteers is paramount. Be very careful when lifting the eskies on and off the trolley into the car. Two people always need to do this, taking great care to avoid twisting or straining.

In wet weather you may wish to take an umbrella or rain jacket. Wear sensible shoes to help avoid slipping on wet footpaths or steps into client's homes. In summer, you will need to wear a hat and sunscreen and drink plenty of fluids. We suggest you take a water bottle with you.

### Handling feedback

Council encourages compliments, complaints and general feedback to ensure that the volunteers and client's receive the best possible service and support. Northern Grampians Shire Council has a volunteer comments/feedback (page 15/16) form that we encourage our Meals on Wheels volunteers to fill out if they have any concerns, comments or general feedback.

Northern Grampians Shire Council complaint resolution link

<http://www.ngshire.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Contact-Us/Complaint-Resolution>

### **Transport and insurance for volunteers**

You must have a current driver's licence and carry it with you at all times. Volunteer workers who are registered with Council are covered within the terms and conditions of the Council's Public Liability Insurance policy for third party personal injury or damage to property caused by an occurrence in connection with the business of Council.

This policy doesn't cover volunteers whilst driving their own vehicles. Therefore, the Council strongly recommends that all volunteer's private vehicles are covered by their own comprehensive insurance policy.

Volunteers should note that the council does not pay insurance costs for private vehicles. Council will not cover costs incurred by volunteers driving uninsured vehicles.

If volunteers wish to take helpers (e.g. friends or relatives) to assist with volunteer duties, these individuals must also be registered with Council to be covered by Public Liability Insurance.

Volunteer parents who take children along whilst they, the parents, participate in volunteer work, must be prepared to do so at their own risk.

Please contact your supervisor immediately should any of the following incidents occur while you are volunteering for Council:

- You suffer any injury.
- Any incident occurs in which injury or property damage occurs to other parties (third parties)

Unless the volunteer has private health insurance, they won't be covered for out-of-pocket medical expenses that are not covered by Medicare.

### **Occupational health and safety**

Council is responsible for the health and safety of all volunteers and employees in the workplace, in line with legislative requirements. To assist in maintaining a healthy and safe environment we ask that you:

- Act with reasonable care
- Take reasonable care in protecting your own health and safety and not put others at risk by your actions or failure to act
- Follow reasonable instructions on health and safety
- Use equipment supplied e.g. basket provided to carry meals in.
- Report hazards, accidents and incidents to the Positive Ageing Office.
- Meals on Wheels will provide information, familiarisation, training and supervision for your first Meals on Wheels induction.

## Code Red Days

Volunteers will be notified as soon as a Code Red Day is announced. No volunteers are to undertake deliveries. Clients assessed as being capable of heating a frozen meal and available to accept it will receive a frozen meal the day prior to the Code Red day. Clients within the townships of Stawell and St Arnaud who are only able to receive a meal on the day will have it delivered by council staff.

## Lifting and carrying

Lifting and carrying are key tasks for volunteers. When lifting eskies into vehicles always ensure two people lift it, one at each end. This will avoid straining or hurting yourself. A kitchen staff member is always there at collection and can lift eskies into your car if you're unable to. Following the right procedures will help avoid injury. When carrying meals into the client homes, place the meal in the basket provided to avoid dropping meals.

## Client rights

1. The right to respect for their individual human worth, dignity and privacy and their independence to be maintained.
2. The right to be provided with services without discrimination.
3. The right to provide and pursue any complaint/feedback about service provision without retribution.
4. The right to privacy and confidentiality.
5. The right to a nutritious meal.

## Client responsibility

1. To be home to answer the door when the volunteers deliver the meal.
2. To let the Aged and Disability office know when they are not home to receive their meal. This may include arrangements they have made for an alternative delivery address.
3. To let the Positive Ageing office know when their situation has changed.
4. To let the office know if they will be away for a length of time and when they expect to be home.
5. To treat our volunteers and staff with dignity and respect.

## Volunteer worker rights

1. The right to be treated as a co-worker, not just free help.
2. To be informed about the service and any changes to the procedures in the handbook.
3. The right to training for the job including information about new developments, procedures and legislation.
4. To receive guidance and support when required or requested.

5. To be free of discrimination or harassment because of race, religion, sex, marital status, age or disability.
6. The right to provide feedback or make a complaint.
7. The right to say “no thank-you”

### **Volunteer worker responsibilities**

1. The responsibility to abide by the Northern Grampians Shire Council Meals on Wheels Handbook and to observe all its guidelines recorded in this document.
2. The responsibility to hold confidential information of the clients and workers in confidence.
3. The responsibility to maintain a caring approach to clients, treat clients with courtesy, respect and consideration, act on complaints and provide the service to the best of their ability.
4. The responsibility to have a friendly, yet professional relationship with clients; this includes, but is not limited to, not accepting gifts from clients (except homemade or garden produce); not having sexual relationships with clients; not giving legal, financial or health related advice to clients; not involving themselves in a client's financial matters including not asking for money or loan of money from a client and not giving a client money or a loan, and not alienating clients from their family.
5. The responsibility to present yourself well including to wear neat clothes appropriate to the type of work and that are not offensive to our clients, not to harass or abuse clients, other workers or members in any way and not to take illegal drugs or consume alcohol when on duty.

## Meals on Wheels step-by-step

- Meals are collected from The main entrance of Stawell Regional Health at 11.30am & East Wimmera Health Service at the kitchen entrance at the rear of the hospital, at 10.30am. (see map on page 13 for parking area and meals collection point)
- In the basket labelled for your round you will receive an information folder which includes your designated round, a map of St Arnaud/Stawell, comments sheet, a copy of this handbook and a complaints form.
- Main meals: 1x fruit juice, 1x soup, 1x main course and 1x sweets.
- Light meals (St Arnaud only): 1.5 rounds (6 points) of mixed sandwiches, 1x piece of fruit.
- Eskies are supplied to assist with delivery. Kitchen staff are there to assist with transporting to the car.
- All meals are individually labelled.
- If the client is not at home meals are to be returned and reported to the kitchen staff. Please sight the client before leaving the meal. If a client isn't home please **DO NOT** leave the meal.
- Deliver meals according to delivery sheets supplied, and consult delivery map as required.
- Upon completion of your round, return all equipment to East Wimmera Health Service or Stawell Regional Health, and place back on the stand.
- Should you have any concerns, do not hesitate to contact the Positive Ageing Services on 5358 8700.
- If you do not have experience with food safety please go to <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/eat-safe> and complete the online training.

## Meals on Wheels collection point



## Frequently asked questions

### What do you do if a client tells you they don't require a meal for a specific day/s?

Politely explain to the client that you are volunteering and any requests to cancel meals need to go through Northern Grampians Shire Council Positive Ageing services. Give the client the shire's phone number. It is the clients responsibility to inform the office of any changes.

### What do you do if your round of meals on wheels is short a soup or juice when delivering meals?

On some occasions you may be short a meal or juice when delivering your round of meals. If this happens we ask that the volunteers call the office immediately so that we can organise with the hospital to provide the item that has been missed. It might mean the volunteer may be required to pop back up the hospital to collect the missed item to deliver it to the client. We do apologise if this happens.

### What do you do if you can't do Meals on Wheels the day you are rostered?

If you are unable to volunteer for Meals on Wheels on the day you are rostered, we ask that you give the office a call by 10am at the latest to let staff know so that they can allocate a replacement. For legal purposes please do not replace yourself with someone who is not a registered volunteer with the Northern Grampians Shire.. If there is no answer when you call the Positive Ageing team , please leave a message.

## Communications and contacts

USEFUL CONTACTS	
Northern Grampians Shire Council	(03) 5358 8700
Stawell Regional Health	(03) 5358 8500
East Wimmera Health Services	(03) 5477 2100
<b>IN AN EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL 000</b>	

**Northern Grampians Shire Council would like to thank our wonderfully dedicated volunteers who help deliver Meals on Wheels in the rain, hail and sun.**

**Without you, our service would not exist.**

**For more information please contact the Positive Ageing Team on 5358 0514**

